



### Inlet Openings and Closings

Hurricane Isabel came ashore in the vicinity of Ocracoke Inlet on September 18, 2003. This small storm produced Isabel Inlet in a low and narrow portion of the barrier adjacent to Hatteras Village (Fig. 20). Two other weak spots (on the northeast end of Ocracoke Island and at the 1962 Buxton Inlet site) came close to forming inlets. Isabel Inlet was subsequently closed within five weeks utilizing sand from the dredged navigation channel for the Hatteras-Ocracoke ferry. This extremely narrow island segment, however, needed a flood-tide delta and its sand deposits to develop island width. This island segment is as vulnerable to inlet formation now as it was prior to Hurricane Isabel. In fact, there are several locations along the North Carolina coast where new inlets could open during a future storm. Using digital elevation data along the Outer

